THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2020 • SUNRISE EDITION • REAL. FAIR. ACCURATE.

Hospitals postpone nonessential surgeries to prepare for patient surge. **Page 5A**

With year disrupted, high school seniors have many questions. **Midlands**

Social distancing calls for a new way of doing business. **Midlands**

A list of restaurants that have switched to delivery or takeout. **Omaha.com**

Omaha World-Herald

Second community spread is a trigger

Case, one of 4 new ones in Douglas County, extends closure of schools, shuts down bars, dine-in restaurants

By Julie Anderson and Erin Duffy
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITERS

The confirmation of a second case of community spread of the novel coronavirus in Douglas County — a 46-year-old man whose illness had no known source — on Wednesday triggered a six- to eight-week closure of schools in the county, the shutdown of bars and restaurants' shift to carryout and delivery only.

Earlier in the day, the Douglas County Health Department issued a public health order prohibiting all public gatherings with more than 10 people through April 30.

That move made guidelines on crowd size released earlier enforceable by law. All schools in Douglas County already have closed.

Douglas County Health Director Adi Pour and Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert provided updates Wednesday afternoon on the Omaha area's four latest confirmed cases of COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus.

The second case of community spread was among the four. Officials said the man began exhibiting symptoms March 11. He was hospitalized in an intensive care unit Sunday after suffering from worsening cough and fatigue and was tested Monday for COVID-19. The positive result came back Tuesday.

Pour said an investigation found that the man hadn't traveled recently, had not had contact with another person with COVID-19 or been at any community events

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ANNA REED/THE WORLD-HERALD

Workers at the Brazen Head Irish Pub had a room to themselves on St. Patrick's Day. The Brazen Head had to turn people away after Gov. Pete Ricketts called Monday for public gatherings to be limited to 10 people. That recommendation became an order Wednesday in Douglas County.

DOUGLAS COUNTY ADDS TEETH TO CROWD LIMIT

Violating Health Department order that caps gatherings at 10 is a misdemeanor

By Bob Glissmann and Rick Ruggles
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITERS

All public gatherings in Douglas County with more than 10 people are prohibited through April 30, the director of the County Health Department said Wednesday.

The Douglas County Board of Health order, Adi Pour wrote, was issued as a result of the global pandemic of coronavirus disease, which is implicated in more than 7,000 deaths.

To the extent necessary, Pour asks that the Douglas County sheriff and all chiefs of police in the county ensure compliance with and enforcement of the order. As of Wednesday, any person violating the order would be subject to a misdemeanor for each offense, she wrote.

The order doesn't apply to courts, medical providers, public utilities, critical county and city operations, continuity of business operations, logistics/distribution centers, congregate living settings, shelters, public transportation, airport travel, shopping at fuel stations, stores or malls, or to family residences housing 10 or more people. However, Pour wrote, people in these settings are instructed to observe all applicable state and federal guidelines for infection control.

Omaha Police Chief Todd Schmaderer said his department will be assembling a team to conduct compliance checks concerning the 10-person limit.

If businesses or groups of people are not complying, officers can issue a ticket to the business owner or any

See Order: Page 2

Brick mason's funeral would have packed a church ...

Erin Grace
COLUMNIST

When Mike Wees died Sunday in a freakish and terrible way, daughter Wendy was confronted not just with the shock of it. She also had to figure out how to lay her father to rest in the era of coronavirus.

In normal times — before the ban on gatherings of 10 or more — Mike Wees' funeral would have been one of the best-attended in Omaha. The popular South Omaha native and brick mason, a well-known former Little League coach, would have packed a church.

But now, thanks to COVID-19, Wendy Wees is forced to delay a public ceremony. She will hold a "celebration of life" service at some yet-to-be determined date.

Other Omaha families are making similar choices, according to a look through the paid obituaries of The World-Herald.

Services by and large don't appear to be happening except at the grave or in private with immediate family only. More than a few notices cite COVID-19 and say services will be held at some future date.

Some funeral homes, like Heafey Hoffman Dworak & Cutler, are offering livestreaming for mourners who can't be in attendance but want to participate from the relative safety of their home computers.

Good Shepherd Funeral Home is offering help in staggering admittance of mourners.

"We'll get as creative as we can and follow the directives to a T," said Mike Hoy, funeral director

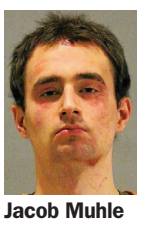
See Grace: Page 3

HY-VEE SHOOTING

Shopper tackled gunman just as off-duty officer prepared to fire

By Kevin Cole and Christopher Burbach
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITERS

Deputy Omaha Police Chief Scott Gray stepped out from behind a Gatorade display and leveled his gun at the armed man who had fired shots at a west Omaha Hy-Vee supermarket.



Jacob Muhle

Nearby, a shopper named Thomas Wenzl crouched behind a stack of bottled water.

Gray yelled at the shooter to drop his gun.

"Almost simultaneously, that's when Tom jumped out and tackled the guy," Gray said.

Gray joined the fray. He wrestled the shooter's gun away. The unplanned, fast-thinking, quick action of a dynamic civilian and police officer duo thus ended an active shooter situation in a crowd-

See Shooting: Page 2

Milestone year for Jays

McDermott says Creighton, which ended year ranked No. 7, had "a historic season." **Sports**

College Hall of Famer

Eric Crouch notes similarities between his senior year, 2001, and today. Tom Shatel, **Sports**

Weather

High: 65 **Low:** 18
thunderstorms
Details: 4A

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